## **Kentucky Historical Society**

## CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS: SUZANNE FELICIANO (UNION MEMBER, ACTIVIST)



Kentucky Historical Society collections

HENDERSON — Suzanne
Feliciano was an advocate for
labor and women's rights in the
1970s and 1980s. She went to
work right out of high school at
the General Electric factory in
Henderson and joined a labor
union, but workers were just
beginning to unionize at her
next employer, Kenco Plastics.

The factory floor workers were almost exclusively women.
Between 1976 and 1980 the plant saw its first female foreman and had several strikes.

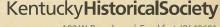
Feliciano became a union steward. The company fired

her after she negotiated the return to work from an employee walk-out. She and her union requested — and won — arbitration. Kenco rehired Feliciano with full back pay for lost time. During another strike, she was arrested for civil disobedience — a tactic labor unions learned from the civil rights movement.

Feliciano was active in the University of Kentucky's Center for Labor Education and Research. She earned a degree in political science from UK then worked with the Southeast Women's Employment Coalition setting up training and advocating for better employment opportunities for women in road construction.

This button illustrates that civil rights' activism included women's and labor issues.

The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) links Kentuckians with their past via archival collections that document people from every walk of life, reaching back to 1509. Letters, diaries, oral histories and photographs, as well as the first and second Kentucky Constitutions, are included. Find these and other KHS collections online at khscatalog.kyvl. org



100 W. Broadway | Frankfort, KY 40601 502-564-1792 | www.history.ky.gov







